seeing him. If he works very little, at least he roads a great deal. Everything is grist for his mill, and during the last month he has been devouring at random Thucydides, Montesquieu, Marivaux, Stendhal, Sainte-Beuve, and so forth.

11

January

At the shipping office, Place Saint-Sulpice, where I go to make an appointment with Jules lehl for dinner, I find the two children Juliette and Marcel, whose story he had told us. We walk back for some distance together. The little girl is eight and the boy seven. lie was carrying home a litre of red wine and some potatoes for dinner.

While walking I read *Lcs Homines dc leltres*[3] by the Goncourt brothers.

At the Cafe Vachette with Ducote and Chanvin. While waiting for Henri Albert, who is to join us soon, I tell them ten or twelve anecdotes about half a dozen "great men." Poor dear Ducote becomes gloomy, Then Chanvin speaks up, describing the "treatments" that Carlyle forced on his wife.

"Really," exclaimed Ducot6, **if it takes such oddities as that to prove one's greatness, I wonder what good I am. , . ."

"Good Lord," I say, "now Ducot6 is worrying about being too good to his wife/'

But my joke does not divert him enough, and for several moments the gentle Ducot6 bewails his lot,

12

January

Spent yesterday evening with Jules lehl* It is the first time I have talked with him alone. Wonderful figure of lehl, perhaps the most remarkable of this whole "generation" (I mean of this whole group) and I was about to write: of all of us.

Since he works in his office until eight o'clock, I wait for him at the

door and together we go to dine in a little restaurant opposite the Caf6 Voltaire,

During the whole dinner, forgetting to eat, he talks. (I have noted elsewhere the tale of his relations with Mme Audoux's niece.)

TJut,[1]* I say when he has finished, "why don't you write all this down? Just as you have told it to me. . . . Ifs just as beautiful as *Krotkdia?*

***0hr** he replies, 'what will you say when I tell you the story of

*I*******************^^

[8] *Men of Letters,* a novel also known by its subtitle, *Charles Demailly* (1860).

[0]-A fragment of Dostoyevsky's *Journal* for November 1876, translated by C, Garnett as "A Gentle Spirit/*